DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 280 934 UD 025 461

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TITLE Minority Youth Dropouts: Personal, Social, and Institutional Reasons for Leaving School.
INSTITUTION Colorado Univ., Colorado Springs. Center for Community Development & Design.
PUB DATE 86
NOTE 48p.
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Dropout Attitudes; *Dropout Characteristics; Dropout Prevention; Dropout Research; *Dropouts; *Minority Groups; Out of School Youth; Secondary Education; *Student School Relationship
IDENTIFIERS *Colorado (Colorado Springs)

ABSTRACT

A study of minority youth dropouts in the Pikes Peak region identified the following traits that characterize this group in contrast to their dominant group counterparts: (1) lower socioeconomic status; (2) parents with lower level of educational achievement; (3) parents' greater emphasis on the importance of education; (4) slightly larger families; (5) less geographic mobility; (6) lower grade averages before leaving school; (7) lower levels of perceived intelligence; (8) more likely to have siblings who dropped out previously; (9) fewer positive relations with teachers and school officials; (10) more truancy while in school; (11) more suspensions while in school; and (12) more encouragement by a school official to drop out. The principle reasons given by minorities for dropping out are as follow: (1) problems with school officials; (2) negative attitudes of teachers; and (3) boredom at school. Study subjects provide the following suggestions to prevent others from dropping out: (1) improve communication between school officials and students; (2) improve or get better teachers: and (3) make courses more interesting. Over 80 percent of each group of dropouts surveyed reported that they would stay in school if they had it to do over again. This report includes recommendations for school board members, school administrators, and community members. (LHW)

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MINORITY YOUTH DROPOUTS

Personal, Social, and Institutional Reasons for Leaving School

Rubén Martinez

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Summer 1986

Center for Community Development & Design

University of Colorado
Colorado Springs

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MINORITY YOUTH DROPOUTS

Personal, Social and Institutional Reasons for Leaving School

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Spring 1986

Center for Community Development and Design
University of Colorado, Colorado Springs

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The Center for Community Development and Design
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Many persons were instrumental in the completion of this project. Thanks are due to the members of the Task Force on Minority Youth, the staff and administration of School Districts 11 and 2, the staff of the City's Industrial Training Department, and the Cooperative Board of the Center for Community Development and Design, all of whom contributed in some way or another to this project. The financial assistance of the Colorado Springs Community Development Department and the University of Colorado is most appreciated. Special thanks are given to Ricardo Concha and Ray Rodriguez, without whose help this project could not have been completed. Finally, special thanks are given to all those young adults who agreed to be interviewed as part of this study.

PREFACE

In the spring of 1986, a survey of dropouts in the Pikes Peak area was conducted. Dropouts are defined in this study as students who withdrew or were expelled from school prior to receiving their high school diploma and who are not known to be enrolled at a local high school. The study had four major purposes: 1) to examine the reasons given by dropouts for having withdrawn from school and see if there are any significant differences between minority and dominant group dropouts; 2) to examine the problems experienced in schools by dropouts prior to their withdrawal and see if there are any significant differences between minority and dominant group members; 3) to present the suggestions provided by dropouts themselves for improving the education process and context, and 4) to provide recommendations for reducing the dropout problem among minority youth.

This research effort represents a departure from traditional research on dropouts in that instead of focusing on the relatively fixed attributes of these persons there is a focus on institutional processes. This approach looks at the cause(s) of dropping out not only in the characteristics of the dropout, but also in relation to those institutional processes and characteristics that affect some students in a negative manner.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The following highlights of this study of minority youth dropouts in the Pikes Peak region are offered as a summary of the research conducted and documented in this report.

1. Dropouts in the region tend to be members of lower socio-economic groups, with minorities being more likely than their dominant group counterparts (Anglo Americans) to be from very poor households.

2. Minority dropouts are more likely than their dominant group counterparts to have parents with low levels of educational achievement.

3. A greater proportion of minority dropouts than their dominant group counterparts reported that their parents frequently emphasized the importance of education.

4. Minority dropouts tend to be from slightly larger families than their dominant group counterparts.

5. Minority dropouts tend to be less (geographically) mobile than their dominant group counterparts.

6. Minority dropouts reported lower grade averages than their dominant group counterparts when they were in school, but very few reported failing grade averages.

7. Minority dropouts reported lower levels of perceived intelligence than their dominant group counterparts, but very few perceived themselves as being of less than average intelligence.

8. Sizable proportions of each group reported having at least one sibling who dropped out of school before them, with more minorities (54%) than dominant group subjects (40%) stating this to be the case.

9. Fewer minorities than dominant group subjects reported having positive relations with their teachers and school officials.

10. Very high proportions of each group (more than 80%) reported having been truant when still enrolled in school.

11. More minorities (75%) than dominant group subjects (56%) reported having been suspended from school at one time or another.

12. More minorities (46%) than dominant group members (32%) reported that they were encouraged to drop out of school by a school official (i.e., told that they should drop out because they would never get through school).

13. More than half of each group reported that someone could have dissuaded them from dropping out of school. Minorities tended to identify one of their parents as that "influential other," while dominant group subjects identified a school official.

14. The principal reasons given by minorities for dropping out of school are: 1) "problems with school officials," 2) "negative attitudes of teachers," and 3) "boredom at school." The same reasons were provided by dominant group subjects, except that the rank order of reasons 2 and 3 were reversed.

15. The principal suggestions provided by the subjects for improving the school context and preventing others from dropping out are 1) improving communication between school officials and students, 2) improving or getting better teachers, and 3) making courses more interesting.

16. Over 80 percent of each group reported that they would stay in school if they had it to do over again.

17. Recommendations for reducing the dropout problem among minorities are provided for school board members, school administrators, and community members to evaluate and consider implementing.

DIMENSIONS OF THE PROBLEM

Race Relations

By definition racial minorities are socially identified populations which are denied access to scarce and valued resources in society by a dominant group. As such, racial minorities are oppressed groups which reflect the racial dimension of more general stratification processes in society. The result of racial stratification is a system of relatively enduring ranks that divides a population along racial lines in terms of material well-being, power, and prestige.

In the United States, racial stratification has been characterized as institutional racism, which means that racial minorities are denied opportunities and equal rights through the normal operation of society's institutions. This occurs whether or not institutional representatives have racial intentions. Of course, some of these representatives are in fact racial bigots, as a system of racial oppression could not endure without such persons, but the point is that the major focus for improving the well-being of minorities should be on the operations of social institutions rather than on prejudiced individuals.

Educational Institutions

Literacy and other skills acquired in formal educational institutions have become increasingly important over time for full participation in the economy. In today's modern technological society those persons failing to acquire these skills and the necessary educational credentials will tend to be placed in marginal and often precarious economic positions. Educational credentials are used as an initial screening device for placing people in high or low-paying occupational positions. To the extent that a population is denied access to the educational system, or given unequal, negative treatment while in the system, "educational oppression" exists in society, since the lack of "credentials" will systematically exclude members of that population from access to scarce and valued societal resources.

Today, there is considerable public alarm about the quality of primary and secondary education in this country. There is also widespread concern, especially among minority communities, about the rates at which students are dropping out from the high schools. Among the nation's largest groups, Hispanics are reported as having the highest dropout rate, followed by Blacks and then Whites. Typically, the factors identified as contributing to high school dropout rates among Hispanics and Blacks are low family income, under-educated parents, difficulty in speaking and writing English and low aspirations on the part of the students.

While there is no doubt that these factors are associated

with the phenomenon of dropping out, it is erroneous to attribute causal significance to them principally because they are in most cases nothing more than the effects of racism, which is the problem the schools are, in part, trying to solve. That is to say, the reason the parents are poor and under-educated is because they, too, have been and are victims of racial oppression. The effects of racial oppression are intergenerational and relatively enduring. Consequently, a view that ignores racial oppression and blames minorities for their own plight can be seen as an ideological justification for the inequalities that characterize American society.

It is imperative that a study of school discontinuance among minority youth focus on the characteristics of both dropouts and educational institutions. The characteristics of dropouts. however, must not be perceived as causes of school discontinuance, but rather as needs that must be met by educational institutions. The inability or unwillingness of educational institutions and their representatives to meet the needs of potential dropouts is probably a more significant factor contributing to school discontinuance than are the characteristics of the dropouts. Blaming the dropout for his or her own situation tends to absolve educational institutions of their involvement as contributors to the problem. Not only is it assumed that schools are going about their business in the proper way, but the gap between what schools offer and students' needs goes unnoticed. Surely minority groups with dropout rates as high as 50% or 60% cannot be completely responsible for such extreme rates([1]). Indeed, such rates by themselves indicate that something is not right in the relations between minority students and educational institutions.

A focus on the relationship between minority students and educational institutions should make visible some of the major factors contributing to the former's high dropout rates. Essentially, the major challenge facing the educational system is that of overcoming the legacy of past and present discrimination in its own and other institutional spheres (i.e., economic, political, housing, etc.). Like crime and deviance, dropping out is a phenomenon that cannot be completely eliminated from society and any effort attempting to do so is doomed to failure. Still, it is possible to reduce the dropout rate significantly while still maintaining the quality of education. Indeed, such efforts are likely to improve the quality of education. Regarding minority youth, for example, an acceptable goal is to get their

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[1] This should not be taken to mean that dropout rates are this high in the Pikes Peak region. Actually, they are much lower. Little attention is given to the dropout rates reported by school districts because data collection is not standardized and there is not a uniform definition of a dropout.

dropout rates down to at least those of their white counterparts.

Teacher-Pupil Interactions

By focusing on the relations between minority students and educational institutions we become aware that the phenomenon of dropping out is a product of sustained interaction between sometimes conflicting participants who spontaneously use shared cultural resources to construct and reconstruct commonsensically interpretable and convenient ways of dealing with each other (Papagiannis, et al, 1983). Among other things, this involves the more or less unconscious invocation on the part of school representatives of culturally preconceived social descriptions such as "intellectually inferior," "potential dropout," "violence-prone," and so on. Of course, by virtue of the cultural differences that exist between minority youths and most representatives of the schools, misunderstandings and breakdowns in communication are likely to occur. Indeed, differences in communicative styles are likely to lead to recurrent patterns of misunderstandings. Due to the power differential that exists between minority students and school representatives it is the latter group's definitions and interpretations that are likely to prevail. In such a context, minority students are likely to conclude that positive and negative sanctions are distributed unfairly, and there is some validity to their view.

Studies focussing on the interactions between teachers and students in the classroom indicate that such relationships are far from uniform (Rist, 1970; Jackson and Cosca, 1974; Laosa, 1977). Students are treated differently by their teachers with regard to praise and ridicule, freedom and control, success and failure, and so on. Disparities in treatment undoubtedly have significance for the students far beyond the boundaries of the classroom. Not only is the student's sense of self affected, but a self-fulfilling prophecy is likely to be set in motion. For example, it is well known that teachers hold different cognitive and behavioral expectations of their students and that such expectations have a strong influence on the actual performance of the pupils. Low expectations on the part of a teacher may lead to low academic and poor behavioral performances on the part of a student, who finally decides to drop out of school because of it.

A study by Gregg Jackson and Cecilia Cosca (1974) clearly demonstrates substantive and statistical differences in teacher-pupil interactions among Anglo and Chicano students. Teachers are more likely to praise and encourage Anglo students than Chicano students. They are also more likely to accept and use Anglo students' ideas, and to direct more questions to them than Chicanos. Jackson and Cosca conclude that "the instructional processes in the classrooms of the Southwest must be changed if [Chicano] youth are to be afforded educational opportunities equal to those available to Anglo students" (1974:228).

A similar conclusion was arrived at by Luis Laosa (1977), who studied teacher-pupil interactions in bilingual classrooms. Because of the type of classroom studied, Laosa expected to find relatively equal treatment of Anglo and Chicano students by teachers. Yet, he found that these classrooms were not very different from traditional classrooms. Thus, he concludes that bilingual, bicultural education is no assurance of educational quality and equality of education for Chicano students. In general, he concludes that:

> ...teachers behave less favorably toward students who (a) come from lower socioeconomic status homes, (b) are lower academic achievers, (c) speak other than Standard English, and (d) come from ethnic minority backgrounds such as Black and [Chicano] (1977:63).

This general conclusion is similar to that of Ray Rist (1970), who, in his study on teacher expectations, found that even within the same classroom students do not have equal access to high quality teaching. He concludes:

> It appears that the public school system not only mirrors the configurations of society, but also significantly contributes to maintaining them. Thus the system of public education in reality perpetuates what it is ideologically committed to eradicate--class barriers which result in inequality in the social and economic life of the citizenry. (1974:449)

Studies focussing on teacher-pupil interactions tend to conclude that less than favorable treatment of poor and minority students by teachers seems to result in low academic achievement by these students. Additionally, as low academic achievement has been consistently associated with dropping out, it seems clear that teachers are <u>partially</u> responsible for the dropout problem, especially among minority students. Other features of the educational process undoubtedly contribute to this phenomenon. Such features include the lack of responsiveness of school programs and representatives to minority student and community needs. For example, staff frequently fail to respond at all to a student's decision to drop out (Fine, 1986). Additionally, most educational curricula and programs are inconsistent with the cultural and community conditions in which the students live (Hamilton, 1986). Finally, it is important to recognize that disciplinary policies may contribute directly to the dropout problem. Policies which result in the suspension or expulsion of students for reasons of truancy do not seem logical. Similarly, punishing students by reducing their grades does not seem to be a positive step in the context of a widespread dropout problem.

Dropout Characteristics and Views

As mentioned above, the poor and racial minorities are most likely to leave school prior to graduation. Other characteristics include low academic performance, low motivation, poor self-esteem, and so on. Implicit in much research on the characteristics of dropouts is the assumption that an understanding of them will permit educators to develop policies and provide practices that will reduce the number of students failing to graduate. Unfortunately, positive results have been negligible because the focus has been on the students rather than the school context and educational processes. Further, when nearly half of the students in certain groups leave school, knowing the characteristics of likely dropouts is not very useful (Fine, 1986). And, in such a context, the problem is not merely to keep educationally at-risk students from dropping out, but rather to provide them with high quality educational experiences.

Still, there are some characteristics of dropouts that may provide some clues as to the kind of policies and practices that should be implemented. Studies on Chicano and Black dropouts have found that: 1) they tend to perceive the occupational system as closed for racial minorities irrespective of their educational attainment, 2) they are more likely to perceive racial discrimination in school than their stay-in counterparts, and 3) they may not differ in intelligence from their stay-in counterparts.

Minority youth who have dropped out of high school tend to perceive a racial division of labor in society which denies minorities access to good jobs even if they acquire a high school diploma (Richardson and Gerlach, 1980; Felice, 1981; Fine, 1986). While their view is somewhat extreme, it is not without validity. This is a racial society and minorities are in fact frequently denied entry into "good jobs". Racial minorities tend to be concentrated in unstable, low-paying jobs. Those who are well-educated tend to be underemployed. In this context, many minority dropouts are aware that education will be of little benefit to them. Consequently, they are not motivated to achieve academically. Dropping out of school, then, appears to be a realistic and sound decision, at least to them.

Minority dropouts are also keenly aware of the racial discriminatory practices that go on at school (Haro, 1977; Felice, 1981; Wehlage and Rutter, 1986). Carlos Haro (1977) conducted an ethnographic study of truant and low-achieving Chicano students (generally considered at-risk students or potential dropouts) and found that many perceived some of their teachers and staff as prejudiced toward them because of their ethnicity. According to Haro:

The majority of the informants were very sensitive to

> the question of whether or not people were prejudiced against them because they were Chicanos. Informants... generally pointed to the vice-principals and the counselors trying to get Chicanos into trouble and then suspended (1977:113).

In some cases, students deliberately "cut" the classes of those teachers whom they perceived as prejudiced and/or "bad."

Lawrence G. Felice (1981), in studying Black dropouts, found that they "are much more likely to perceive racial discrimination in school, even in the same school, as other Black students not dropping out" (p. 421). He further found that such perceptions are strongly related to teachers' expectations and school policies on suspension and expulsion.

Finally, it is important to recognize that dropouts probably do not differ in intelligence from those students who go on to complete the requirements for a high school diploma. Dropouts are commonly described as having reading and writing difficulties, implying that they are not very bright. While many undoubtedly do, it is erroneous to believe that all have such problems. For example, a recent report by the National Hispanic University claims that approximately 20% of Chicano dropouts in the state of California had IQs of 120 (or higher). Similarly, Ronald Richardson and Craig Gerlach (1980) found that "Black dropouts have a higher intelligence, as measured by standardized IQ tests, than those Blacks who remain in school" (p. 491). The intent here is not to argue that dropouts are smarter than their stay-in counterparts, but to point out that not all dropouts are of low intelligence, as they have been stereotyped. Given the intellectual prowess of some dropouts, it is no wonder that so many of them find school boring and repetitive (Haro, 1977).

SURVEY METHODOLOGY AND RESULTS

Sampling

Initially, the research design was to produce a disproportionate stratified, random sample of dropouts between the ages of 16 and 21. This sample was to consist of 40 Chicanos, 40 Blacks and 40 Anglos. Each of these subgroups was to have equal numbers of females and males. As the project got underway, it soon became evident that obtaining such a sample was going to be rather difficult. In fact, we were unable to obtain it, but we did obtain enough interviews to provide statistically valid results. The problems surrounding the sampling process are discussed in this section.

The first problem was identifying dropouts. Of the possible sources of lists of dropouts in the area three were selected for contact: 1) School District 11, 2) School District 2, and 3) the City's Industrial Training Department. School District 11 was selected because it is the largest school district in the area and has a mix of students from different socioeconomic and ethnic backgrounds (Yaffe, 1982). School District 2 was selected because it is the next largest school district in the area and has a sizable proportion of minority students (Yaffe, 1982). Most of the minority youth in the Pikes Peak region attend or attended one of the high schools in these school districts. The Industrial Training Department was selected because it deals with many dropouts living in the region. By selecting from among those dropouts who had relations with the Industrial Training Department, the dropout population from the other local school districts are represented in the sample. Admittedly, the sample is somewhat biased in the direction of those specific populations, since there is no representation from those dropouts who did not have relations with the Department. While the two school districts are restricted in the release of information about students, they did cooperate by drawing samples from their and 1985-1986 dropout populations. Potential interviewees were mailed a description of the research project and an information release form, which was to be signed and returned to the school district. The district then released the names and addresses of those who completed and returned the form. Unfortunately, many of the addresses used by the school districts were no longer valid and many of the letters were returned undelivered. Few of the recipients of the letters that were delivered actually completed and returned the information release forms. This prompted a second mailout to another sample (1984-1985) within each of the districts, but the results were the same. In light of the low returns, district administrators arranged to have potential subjects called by telephone to learn if they had received the forms and request that they participate in the project. This effort produced a few more returns (at best 15). Interestingly, the dialogues between the research

assistants and the potential subjects seem to indicate that mediation by the school districts had a negative effect on the research effort. It seems that dropouts hold quite negative sentiments toward their school district and want little, if anything, to do with it and its representatives. This view is further confirmed by the greater number of positive responses by those subjects selected from a list of participants in one or more programs of the Industrial Training Center.

Beyond the negative impact of the mediating role of the school districts two other factors seriously affected the size of the sample. These factors are the high mobility rates of dropouts and their general reluctance to participate in a research project focusing on their reasons for having dropped out of school. Approximately two-thirds of the dropouts could not be located. In most cases, the family had moved and the new address could not be obtained. In a few cases (less than ten), potential subjects had left their homes and family members were unaware of their whereabouts. In each case, these persons had left home after dropping out of school. In several cases, potential subjects (mostly males) had left for military service or moved to another city but continued to have contact with their family. A few of the young men were in jail or some type of correctional facility. Also, a small number of dropouts had returned to school. Tragically, there was one suicide among those selected for an interview.

Finally, refusal to participate in the study was a factor affecting the size of the sample. Dropouts seem quite reluctant and unwilling to discuss their reasons for having dropped out of school, at least with members of the research team. They tend to consider their dropping out a personal matter that is "nobody else's business." Nevertheless, in spite of all these barriers, the research team was able to conduct enough interviews with randomly selected dropouts in the area that allow us to glean a view of the characteristics of dropouts in the region and their reasons for having withdrawn from school.

Sociodemographics([2])

Interviews were conducted with fifty-three dropouts living in the Pikes Peak region. The ethnicity of the subjects is as follows: Twenty-five are Anglo-American (47.2%), nineteen are Hispanic (35.8%), the overwhelming majority being Chicanos, five are Black (9.4%), and four were classified as Other (7.5%), three being Native Americans and one of Asian ancestry. Because the

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[2] Some of the data in this and the next two sub-sections is presented in textual rather than tabular form in order to avoid having a multitude of small tables.

focus of the study is on minority dropouts, the data were recoded to create a variable called racial status, which consists of two categories: 1) dominant group, comprised of whites, and 2) minority group, comprised of Chicanos, Blacks, and Others. This allows for comparisons along this dimension.

With regard to the sex of the subjects, twenty are female (37.7%) and thirty-three are male (62.3%). Among females, nine are ethnic minorities (45%) and eleven are dominant group members (55%). Among males, eighteen are ethnic minorities (56.3%) and fourteen are dominant group members (43.8%). While the sample is not large, certainly not large enough to examine in detail each of these subgroups, it is possible to glean a picture of dropouts in the region from it.

The age range of the subjects was from sixteen (4) to twenty-four (1). As the data in Table 1 show, minorities in the sample tend to be younger than their counterparts. Particularly evident is the greater number of minorities who are 16 and 17 years of age. While at first glance it may appear that minorities drop out of school at a younger age than their dominant counterparts, this conclusion is not well supported. On the one hand, the difference between the two groups is not statistically significant, and an examination of the year that the subjects left school indicates that dominant group members in the sample have been out of school longer([3]). For example, 25% of those subjects in the dominant category dropped out prior to 1983, while only 4% of minorities did so. On the other hand, four of the minorities (15%) indicated that they left school at the age of 15, while only one of the dominant group members (4%) indicated the same. Additionally, 14 minorities (50%) indicated that they had left school at the age of 16 or younger, while 8 dominant group members (32%) indicated having left school at such a young age. Seventeen seems to be the age when the largest proportion of these young adults left school.

In terms of country of origin and language spoken at home, the data indicate 98% of the subjects were born in this country and that 96% speak English at home. Only one subject was born in another country, and only two subjects speak a language other than English at home. In this region, then, these two factors can be dismissed as contributors to the dropout phenomenon, especially among minority students.

It is already well-known that students from low economic strata are most likely to drop out of school. Our data in Table 2 indicate that most of our subjects have such a background,

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[3] Because dropouts from both groups are quite similar one would not expect many statistically significant differences to emerge.

Table 1. Respondent's Age by Sex By Racial Status.

	Dominant Sex				Minority Sex			
	Male		Female		Male		Female	
Age	F	%*	F	%	F	%	F	%
16	-	-	-	-	4	21.0	1	11.1
17	2	14.3	1	9.1	3	15.8	3	33.3
18	1	7.1	4	36.4	4	21.0	2	22.2
19	5	35.7	1	9.1	3	15.8	1	11.1
20	4	28.6	2	18.2	4	21.0	1	11.1
21	1	7.1	2	18.2	1	5.3	-	-
22	-	-	1	9.1	-	-	1	11.1
23	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
24	1	7.1	-	-	-	-	-	-
	n=14	99.9%	n=11	100.1%	n=19	99.9%	n=9	99.9%
	$\bar{X}$ = 19.4 (average)		$\bar{X}$ = 19.3		$\bar{X}$ = 18.2		$\bar{X}$ = 18.2	
					Total N = 53			
					$\bar{X}$ = 18.4 (combined)			

* Deviations from 100.0% are due to rounding.

Table 2. Reported Annual Income of Parents by Subject's Racial Status.

	Dominant Group		Minority Group	
Income	F*	%**	F	%
< 8,999.	3	12.5%	10	35.7%
$9,000.-$10,999.	2	8.3%	4	14.3%
$11,000.-$12,999.	4	16.7%	6	21.4%
$13,000.-$14,999.	7	29.2%	1	3.6%
$15,000.-$16,999.	1	4.2%	5	17.8%
$17,000.-$18,999.	2	8.3%	-	-----
$19,000.-$20,999.	3	12.5%	-	-----
> $21,000.	2	8.3%	2	7.1%
	n = 24	100.0%	n = 28	99.9%
			Total	N = 52

* One case missing.
** Deviations from 100.0% are due to rounding.

however, it is clear that more minority than dominant group members come from very poor households. Nearly three-fourths (71.4%) of the minorities reported that their parents have annual incomes of less than $13,000, compared to nearly two-fifths (38%) of the dominant group. Less than one-tenth in each group indicated that their parents earned more than $21,000 a year.

Table 3 presents the level of education attained by the parents of the subjects. Approximately one-third (32%) of the minorities indicated that their father did not finish high school. This figure is close to that of the dominant group dropouts (27.3%), except that it conceals the fact that more minorities probably have fathers who have lower educational attainment levels than their counterparts. This is indicated by the two subjects who stated that their fathers have less than an 8th grade education. At the other end of the educational continuum, approximately one-fourth of minority subjects have fathers who attained some educational level beyond high school, while more than one-third (38.2%) of the dominant group subjects indicated that this was the case.

The educational attainment pattern of the subjects' mothers is similar to that of their fathers, except that mothers seem to have less education. More mothers had less than an 8th grade education, and none completed college. Nearly one-half of minority mothers (48.1%) did not finish high school, while less than one-fifth of the dominant group mothers (16.7%) are in the same category. Also, a greater proportion of these women (33.3%) acquired education beyond high school, while only a very small proportion of minority mothers (3.7%) did so.

Although many parents of dropouts probably do not have the academic skills to help their children in academic work, the data indicate that they tend to emphasize the importance of education to their children (92%). As the data in Table 4 show, education was emphasized more frequently among minorities than among the dominant group. Approximately 55.6 percent of minority subjects who stated that their parents emphasized the importance of education indicated that they did so "all the time," while approximately 30.4 percent of dominant group subjects indicated that this was the case. Among both groups approximately three-fourths of the parents emphasized that education is important in life. This finding contrasts with the common view that parents of dropouts fail to teach the value of education to their children. Obviously, other factors are operating to produce the dropout phenomenon.

In terms of the number of siblings and the number of persons living at home when the subject was attending school there is little difference between the groups. The average number of siblings among dominant group subjects is 3.0, while the figure is 3.6 for minorities. Minority families tend to be

Table 3. Father's and Mother's Educational Attainment Level by Subjects' Racial Status.*

Education Level	Dominant Group				Minority Group			
	Father's		Mother's		Father's		Mother's	
	F	%**	F	%	F	%	F	%
< 8th Grade	--	----	--	-----	2	8.0%	5	18.5%
< 12th Grade	6	27.3%	4	16.7%	6	24.0	8	29.6
H.S. Diploma	8	36.4	12	50.0	11	44.0	14	48.1
Trade School, Some College	5	22.7	6	25.0	4	16.0	1	3.7
Bachelor's	2	9.0	2	8.3	1	4.0	--	----
Master's	1	4.5	--	-----	1	4.0	--	----
	n=22	99.9%	n=24	100%	n=25	100%	n=28	99.9%

N = 52

* Differences in frequencies are due to some subjects not having one of their parent.

** Deviations from 100.0% are due to rounding.

Table 4. Frequency of Educational Emphasis by Parents by Subject's Racial Status

	Racial Status			
	Dominant Group		Minority Group	
	F	%*	F	%
All the Time	7	30.4	15	55.6
Often	12	52.2	5	18.5
Sometimes	3	13.0	5	18.5
Not Often	1	4.3	2	7.4
	n=23	99.9%	n=27	100.0%
				N=50**

* Deviations from 100.0% are due to rounding.

** Three subjects indicated that their parents did not emphasize education.

somewhat larger than those of the dominant group. More important, however, was the number of persons living at home when the subject was going to school, for this has to do with crowding, noise, and other distractions which are known to affect homework and study activities. The average number of persons living at home when the subject was still enrolled in school was 3.8 for the dominant group and 4.1 for the minorities. Because averages tend to conceal extremes, it is important to point out that less than 4.0% of the subjects in each group reported that seven or more persons were living at home when they were still enrolled in school.

Finally, subjects were asked how many other cities they had lived in during the past five years because it is commonly known that students dislike changing schools and leaving their friends behind. Approximately 67.8 percent of the minorities reported that they had not moved from one city to another during this period, while 40 percent of the dominant group subjects indicated not having moved. Only about 10.7 percent of minorities indicated that they had lived in one other city during the past five years, as compared to 12 percent of their dominant counterparts. The same percentage of minorities (10.7%) reported that they has lived in two other cities, while 24 percent of their dominant counterparts indicated having done so. Only 7.1 percent of minorities stated that they had lived in three other cities, as compared to 16 percent of dominant group subjects. And, only 3.6 percent of minorities reported living in four or more other cities, while 8 percent of their dominant counterparts reported having done so. It seems, then, that dominant group subjects have been more mobile than minorities. However, it is important to keep in mind that these individuals are quite mobile after leaving school, and that dominant group subjects tend to have been out of school longer than their minority counterparts. Perhaps it is this which the data are reflecting.

In sum, while there are some sociodemographic differences between dominant group dropouts and minority dropouts, such differences do not seem to be significant. In other words, the two groups do not differ significantly in ways that would seem to cause higher dropout rates among minorities. Other factors, then, are probably operating to produce higher dropout rates among minority youths.

School Dynamics

Of the fifty-three subjects interviewed, all but one reported that they were attending a school in the region when they dropped out. Of those attending schools here, 50 identified for the interviewers the school they were attending at the time they dropped out. The respective schools were then coded by district. Of the twenty seven minorities who identified their

school, 74 percent were attending a school in District 11, and 26 percent were attending a school in District 2. Of the twenty-three dominant group subjects who identified their school, 56.5 percent were attending a school in District 11, 17.4% were attending a school in District 2, 13 percent were attending District 8, 4.3 percent were attending District 14, 4.3 percent were attending District 3, and one individual was attending school elsewhere.

In terms of academic performance (as reported by the subjects), over two-thirds of each group had grade averages of "C" or higher when they were in school. Only 7.1 percent of minorities reported having a grade average of "F", with 4 percent of dominant group subjects reporting the same. Similar proportions of each group (24%) reported having a grade average of "D". Approximately 57.1 percent of minorities stated that they had a grade average of "C", as compared to 36 percent of their dominant counterparts. Only 14.3 percent of minorities reported having a grade average of "B", as compared with 28 percent of dominant group subjects. Finally, no minorities reported a grade average of "A", while 8 percent of dominant group subjects did so. The important point here is that less than one-third of the respondents stated that they had failing grade averages. This finding is consistent with how intelligent these individuals perceive themselves.

Asked to indicate how intelligent they perceived themselves to be relative to others their own age, the overwhelming majority (96 percent) of the subjects indicated that they were of average or above average intelligence. None indicated that they were below or far below average, although one in each group saw himself or herself as being slightly below average. Approximately 57 percent of minorities perceived themselves to be of average intelligence, as compared to 40% of their white counterparts. Only 7.1% of minorities perceived themselves to be of above average intelligence, as compared to 32% of the dominant group subjects. Finally, only about 8 percent in each group perceived themselves to be of far-above-average intelligence. It seems rather clear that these subjects did not leave school because they believe that they do not have the ability to perform the academic work required of them.

It seems, however, that many of the subjects have at least one sibling who left school before they, themselves, dropped out. Approximately 53.6 percent of minorities reported that this is the case, as compared to 40 percent of their dominant counterparts. Without a comparison group on non-dropouts it is difficult to identify the importance of this factor. Perhaps, as one subject implied, school representatives transfer their impressions from one sibling to another. This particular individual related an experience where some teachers treated her as if she would not succeed in school because her older sister

had experienced difficulties in school and dropped out. Apparently, some teachers expected her to do the same, and she did.

Table 5 presents data summarizing how well subjects got along with teachers, administrators, and other students. With regard to teachers, it seems that dominant group members had better relations with them than did minorities. More than one-half of the dominant group subjects (52%) reported "good" or "very good" relations with teachers, as compared to approximately one-third of the minorities (35.7%). Approximately the same proportion of each group (32% and 35.7%, respectively) reported having relations that were "all right" with their teachers. More minorities (28.6%) than dominant group subjects (16%) reported "not very good" or poor relations with their teachers.

Relations with administrators (principals, deans, etc.) were also better among dominant group subjects than among minorities. Approximately 44 percent of dominant group subjects reported "good" and "very good" relations with administrators, as compared to 35.7 percent of the minorities. Only 12 percent of the dominant group reported "all right" relations with administrators, as compared to 28.6 percent of minority subjects. Over one-third of each group reported "not very good" and "poor" relations with administrators, with 44 percent of dominant group subjects reporting this to be the case, and 35.7 percent of minorities doing so. That these proportions are somewhat sizable is not surprising, as it is school administrators who are the disciplinarians and the enforcers of policies and rules.

Most of the subjects reported "good" and "very good" relations with other students. Approximately 60 percent of dominant group subjects reported this to be the case, as compared to 71.4 percent of minorities. Approximately 36 percent of dominant group subjects and 21.4 percent of minorities reported "all right" relations with other students. Only 4 percent of dominant group members and 7.2 percent of minorities reported "not very good" and "poor" relations with other students. It seems, then, that the overwhelming majority of the subjects got along well with their peers at school.

Asked if they were ever truant before quitting school, the majority of the subjects answered in the affirmative. Approximately 80 percent of dominant group subjects and 85.7 percent of minorities reported that they had been truant. Of the twenty dominant group subjects who indicated that they had been truant, 85% reported that they did so more than two or three times a month, and 15% did so about once a month. Of the twenty-four minorities who indicated that they were truant, 79.2 percent did so more than two or three times a month, and 20.8 percent did so about once a month.

Table 5. Type of Relations with Teachers, Administrators, and Students by Subject's Racial Status.

Relations and Group	Dominant Group		Minority Group	
Teachers	F	%	F	%
very good	6	24.0%	4	14.3%
good	7	28.0	6	21.4
all right	8	32.0	10	35.7
not very good	4	16.0	5	17.9
poor	-	-	3	10.7
Administrators				
very good	7	28.0%	3	10.7%
good	4	16.0	7	25.0
all right	3	12.0	8	28.6
not very good	6	24.0	6	21.4
poor	5	20.0	4	14.3
Students				
very good	7	28.0%	8	28.6%
good	8	32.0	12	42.8
all right	9	36.0	6	21.4
not very good	1	4.0	1	3.6
poor	-	-	1	3.6
	n = 25	100.0%	n = 28	100.0%
				N = 53

With regard to suspension from school, 56 percent of the dominant group subjects indicated that they had been suspended at least once, as compared to 75% of minorities. It seems, then, that proportionately more minorities than dominant group students get suspended from schools in the area. Table 6 presents data summarizing the reasons for suspensions among the two groups. The groups are relatively similar in most categories. Interestingly, a greater proportion (9.6%) of dominant group subjects than minorities were suspended for fighting. This finding is in contrast to the commonly held view that minority youth are more violent than their white counterparts.

With respect to criminal activity, most of the subjects reported that they had not been "in trouble with the law" prior to dropping out of school. Approximately 24 percent of dominant group subjects and 33.3 percent of minorities indicated that they had been in some trouble with law officials. Most of the offenses committed by these subjects had to do with property (e.g., shoplifting, burglary, vandalism).

Asked if they were working when they quit school, 44 percent of dominant group subjects reported that they were, as compared to 39.3 percent of minorities. These figures are not significantly different from those students who stay in school in this region (Hughes, et al, 1983).

Dropping Out

Of the 53 subjects interviewed, a rather sizable proportion (40%) of them reported that they had been encouraged to drop out by a school official (e.g. teachers, counselors, principals, etc.). Encouragement here means that the subject was told (reportedly) that he or she should leave the school because he or she was never going to "make it". Approximately 32 percent of dominant group subjects reported that they had been encouraged to leave, as compared to 46.4 percent of minorities. Because there is no comparison group of non-dropouts, we cannot estimate the extent to which this type of encouragement occurs. But, it is clear that minorities are more likely to be encouraged by school officials to leave school than are their white counterparts.

Fifty-one of the fifty-three subjects responded to the question, "Do you think that someone could have said something to you at that time which would have changed your mind about quitting?" More than one-half of the dominant group subjects (54.2%) answered affirmatively, as compared to nearly two-thirds (63%) of minorities. Of the thirty-one subjects who believe that someone could have dissuaded them from dropping out, thirty were able to identify that individual. Table 7 summarizes this information. Among dominant group subjects it was a school official who could have dissuaded several (61.5%) from dropping

Table 6. Reason for Suspension from School by Subject's Racial Status.

	Racial Status			
	Dominant Group		Minority Group	
Reason	F	%*	F	%
truancy	6	42.9%	10	47.6%
drugs	-	-	2	9.5
fighting	6	42.9	7	33.3
other	2	14.3	2	9.5
	n = 14	100.1%	n = 21	99.9%

N = 35

* Deviations from 100.0% are due to rounding.

Table 7. Individual Who Could Have Dissuaded Subject From Dropping Out by Racial Status.

	Racial Status			
	Dominant Group		Minority Group	
	F	%	F	%
Mother	2	15.4%	6	35.3%
Father	-	-	3	17.6
Friend	1	7.7	1	5.9
School Official	8	61.5	5	29.4
Other	2	15.4	2	11.8
	n = 13	100.0%	n = 17	100.0%

N = 30

out. Unfortunately, few minorities (29.4%) perceive school officials as having this type of influence. Minorities tend to identify one of their parents (52.9%) as the person who could have dissuaded them, with more identifying their mother (35.3%) than their father (17.6%). Interestingly, not a single dominant group subject identified his or her father as the individual who could have dissuaded him or her from dropping out.

The responses provided by the subjects when asked to identify the principal reasons for having dropped out of school resulted in a list of diverse reasons. Some of the subjects provided only one reason and others provided several. Table 8 summarizes the reasons provided by the subjects for having dropped out of school. The categories of "personal problems" and "other reasons" include a multitude of responses provided by the subjects. This is why these categories have relatively high frequencies. Among the responses coded as "personal problems" are health problems, marriage, divorce, pregnancy, and running away from home. Among the responses coded as "other reasons" are lack of transportation, expulsion, poor relations with parents, disliked special programs, trouble with law officials, problems with other students, friends had quit school, couldn't get a babysitter for child, and lack of money. These categories, then, indicate that students experience a wide range of problems that seem to have a negative impact on their schooling. The other categories, however, are much narrower and specific, and allow us to identify differences between the groups more easily.

Among both groups the modal category is "problems with school officials." Approximately 50 percent of minorities indicated that this was a principal reason for their leaving school, as compared to 36 percent of dominant group subjects. The next major reason for dropping out among dominant group subjects is the boredom they experienced at school (32%). Approximately 17.8 percent of minorities indicated that they found school boring. A greater proportion of them (21.4%) indicated that teachers exhibited poor or negative attitudes toward them. A sizable proportion of dominant group subjects (28%) also indicated that this was the case. Among the statements made by subjects about teachers are the following: 1) "Teachers didn't take the time to explain things," 2) "Teachers had a negative attitude," 3) "Teachers need to stay up with the kids and the changing times." Another important reason among minorities for dropping out is "poor academic performance" (17.8%). These individuals indicated that they were behind in schoolwork or that they weren't going to pass to the next grade, so they decided to quit school. Approximately 16 percent of dominant group subjects and 10.7 percent of minorities stated that they left school because they "obtained a much needed" job. Only a very small proportion of each group reported that the use of drugs and alcoholic beverages led to their dropping of school.

Table 8. Reasons for Dropping Out of School by Subject's Racial Status.

	Racial Status			
	Dominant Group		Minority Group	
Reason	F*	%**	F	%
Poor Academic Performance	2	8.0%	5	17.8%
Problems with School Officials	9	36.0%	14	50.0%
School was Boring	8	32.0%	5	17.8%
Use of Drugs and Alcohol	1	4.0%	2	7.1%
Obtained Needed Employment	4	16.0%	3	10.7%
Poor Attitude of Teachers	7	28.0%	6	21.4%
Personal Problems	8	32.0%	8	28.6%
Other Reasons	10	40.0%	14	50 0%
	n = 25		n = 28	
			N = 53	

*The frequency indicates the number of individuals who indicated that this was one of their reason for leaving school. Consequently, the frequencies do not add to the number of persons in each subgroup or the sample.

**Percentages will not sum to 100.0 because some individuals provided more than one reason for having dropped out of school.

Table 9 summarizes the suggestions provided by subjects for improving the school so that other students will not drop out. Among the suggestions coded as "Other" are reducing overcrowding, providing day-care facilities, teaching students how to get along with other students, counseling students about drugs and alcohol, changing the suspension policy (too strict), reducing racism in the schools, and making statistics on dropouts public. Nearly one-half of each group provided suggestions that were coded as "Other." At minimum, these responses indicate that the subjects consider several aspects of the school as needing improvement.

According to the subjects, the major means by which to improve the schools and prevent dropping out by students is to improve communication between school officials and students, improve or get better teachers, and make conscious efforts to increase student interest in courses, subjects, etc. Approximately 56 percent of dominant group subjects and 39.3 percent of minorities suggested improving communication between students and school officials. Approximately 44 percent of dominant group members and 32.1 percent of minorities suggested getting better teachers or having those already there improve their attitudes and pedagogical techniques. Typical statements made by the subjects are: 1) "Teachers spend too much time with certain students" (favorites), 2) "Teachers should pay more attention to students," 3) "Teachers should show more concern for students," and 4) "Teachers shouldn't humiliate students with problems."

Approximately 32 percent of dominant group subjects and 39.3 percent of minorities suggested that schooling be made more interesting. While they weren't able to suggest how this could be done, they tended to use phrases such as "new programs," "making subjects more interesting," and teaching students a wider range of "career-oriented skills." Finally, subjects suggested improvements in counseling.

Asked "If you had it to do over again, would you stay in school or quit?" most of the subjects responded that they would stay in school. Only 16.7 percent of dominant group subjects and 14.3 percent of minorities said they would quit again. The overwhelming majority of the subjects seem to have learned that education is very important and plan to attain more.

Table 10 summarizes the educational aspirations of the subjects. Only a very small proportion of each group stated that they would not pursue formal education any further. Among dominant group subjects, 52 percent stated that they aspired to obtain a college degree, as compared to 42.8 percent of minorities. Seemingly, minorities have lower educational aspirations than their counterparts, since 39.3 percent aspire to obtain their G.E.D. certificate as compared to 16 percent of table 9 dominant group subjects. But, minorities may be

Table 9. Suggestions for Improving School by Subject's Racial Status.

	Racial Status			
	Dominant Group		Minority Group	
Suggestions	F*	%	F	%
Develop Programs to Increase Student Interest	8	32.0%	11	39.3%
Improve Communication Between School Officials & Students	14	56.0%	11	39.3%
Provide More Counseling to Schools	5	20.0%	4	14.3%
Improve or get Better Teachers	11	44.0%	9	32.1%
Other	13	52.0%	13	46.4%
	n = 25		n = 28	
			N = 53	

*Some respondents provided more than one suggestion. Thus, the summed frequencies will not equal the number of respondents. The same applies to percentages.

Table 10. Educational Aspirations by Subject's Racial Status.

	Racial Status			
	Dominant Group		Minority Group	
Educational Aspirations	F	%	F	%
College Degree	13	52.0%	12	42.8%
Vocational Training	6	24.0	4	14.3
G.E.D.	4	16.0	11	39.3
No More	2	8.0	1	3.6
	n = 25	100%	n = 28	100%

N = 53

concerned with taking one hurdle at a time, or their aspirations may be based on a realistic assessment of their situation (i.e., opportunities, skills, etc.).

Unfortunately, the efforts of the subjects to obtain more education are not consistent with their aspirations. For example, only 24 percent of dominant group subjects and 32.1 percent of minorities are currently enrolled in an education program. It seems that a greater proportion of minorities than dominant group subjects are making an effort to realize their educational goals. Certainly, all of them are assessing their future.

CONCLUSION

This research project focused on minority youth dropouts in the Pikes Peak region. The purpose was to identify the demographic and socio-economic characteristics of this segment of the population, the problems they experienced in school, their reasons for dropping out of school, their suggestions for preventing dropping out by students, and their educational aspirations. A comparison group of Anglo-Americans was used to identify problems peculiar to minority youth. However, it is important to keep in mind the fact that minority and dominant group dropouts have much in common. They tend to be from lower socio-economic strata and, consequently, are likely to exhibit values and behavior patterns that are different from middle-strata groups (although both groups emphasize education). And, because school representatives tend to emphasize middle-strata values and behaviors, children from the lower socio-economic groups will experience problems in the schools. Still, the factor of race will differentially influence the experiences of students even if they are from the same socio-economic stratum.

In general, our sample of dropouts is, as expected, comprised mostly of individuals from lower socio-economic strata. However, minorities are more likely than their dominant group counterparts to come from very poor households.

In terms of parents' education, minority youth dropouts are more likely than their dominant group counterparts to have parents with rather limited education backgrounds. It is, of course, well known that minorities in general have lower educational achievement levels than dominant group members, and this finding is undoubtedly reflective of this situation in the larger society.

While most parents of dropouts probably cannot help them perform academic work, the data indicate that they tend to emphasize the importance of education to their children. In this study, the data show that education was emphasized more frequently among minorities than dominant group members. This finding is in sharp contrast to the common view that minorities fail to teach their children the importance of education. Indeed, education is probably more important for minorities because of the many barriers they confront.

In terms of family size, minorities tend to have somewhat larger families than their counterparts. Consequently, they tend to have more persons living at home. The differences, however, were not large. Still, because dropouts do live in environments characterized by poverty, it is quite likely that their houses are relatively small and do not have the space necessary for productive study and homework activities.

With respect to mobility, dominant group members tend to be more mobile than minorities, most of whom had not lived in another city during the past five years. This means that this factor is not significant in contributing to the dropout phenomenon among minorities in this area.

In terms of academic performance, dominant group members tended to report grade averages that are higher than those reported by minorities. Most minorities, however, reported grade averages of "C" or higher. Consequently, low academic performance is not a primary factor contributing to the dropout problem among minorities in this area. Of course, one could question the accuracy of the reported grade averages, but the finding is consistent with other data collected through this project and with the findings of other studies which have found that some minority dropouts are in fact very bright individuals. Additionally, it is consistent with the subjects' perceptions of their own intelligence. Very few of the subjects perceived themselves as being of less than average intelligence.

An important factor that seems to be related to an individual's decision to drop out of school is having a sibling who has already done so. Specifically, the influence of this factor may be manifested through teachers' negative perceptions and treatment of these students.

Relations with teachers, school officials, and other students tended to differ across the two groups. Dominant group subjects reported better relations with teachers and school officials than did minorities. Better relations with other students, however, were reported by minorities than by dominant group subjects. It seems that for minority students relations with teachers and school officials are more problematic than are those with other students.

With respect to truancy, most of the subjects reported having engaged in this activity. Few, if any, differences exist between the two groups with regard to this factor. However, minority students are more likely to be suspended from school, though perhaps not for truancy, as the proportions for the groups were relatively similar for this category.

Both work and criminal activity do not appear to be significant aspects of the lives of the subjects in the sample. There probably is no significant difference between the groups with regard to these factors. Indeed, dropouts in general probably do not differ significantly from non-dropouts in this regard.

Nearly one-half of minority subjects, as compared to one-third of dominant group subjects, reported that they were encouraged to drop out of school by a school representative.

This type of behavior is completely inappropriate on the part of school representatives and clearly indicates that they contribute directly to the dropout phenomenon. Minority students in particular are told that they are not wanted in the schools.

More minorities than dominant group members reported that someone probably could have dissuaded them from dropping out. While dominant group subjects believe a school official could have helped them, minorities tend to perceive their parents, especially their mother, as the person who could have dissuaded them from leaving school. The fact that minorities look to the family for support indicates the importance of the family to them and reflects the poor relations that they tend to have with school representatives.

The reasons given by dropouts for having left school are numerous and diverse. Among the most frequent reasons given by minorities are problems with school officials, negative attitudes of teachers, the boredom they experienced at school, and poor academic performance, respectively. Clearly, poor relations and problems with school representatives are perceived by minorities as major factors leading to the dropout problem.

This conclusion is further supported by the suggestions provided by subjects for improving the schooling process and preventing other students from dropping out. An equal number of minorities suggested improving communication between school officials and students (39%), and making courses more interesting (39%). A slightly smaller number suggested getting better teachers. These suggestions indicate that minority students are experiencing communication problems with school representatives, and they are finding the content of at least some courses uninteresting or even irrelevant.

Most of the subjects indicated that if they had it to do over again they would not quit school. And, most of them indicated that they intend to pursue their education further. Thus, they recognize the importance of education. Unfortunately, for most of them the problems they experienced at school led them to drop out. Now they have to identify alternative means by which to meet their educational needs. But, because discontinued participation at one point of the education process virtually precludes achievement at higher levels, most of these young adults will never achieve the educational levels allowed by their abilities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Many different approaches have been and are being brought to bear on the dropout problem. Most approaches, however, fail to distinguish between dominant and minority dropouts. As this and other studies demonstrate, there are substantial differences in the problems faced by these different students and solutions should take such differences into account. The following recommendations for reducing the dropout rate among minority youth are based on knowledge of the problems that they face in the schools. Specifically, the recommendations are premised on the view that the traditional school system has failed to meet the educational needs of these students, and that alternative programs are likely to result in "separate and unequal" educational experiences among dominant and minority students. The general solution is to change the traditional school system to meet the educational needs of minority students. It is recommended:

1. That local school district administrators recognize and admit that the traditional school system negatively impacts students from lower socio-economic groups, especially ethnic minorities. Denial of this problem prevents the development of solutions and perpetuates the dropout problem among minority youth.

2. That local school district administrators ensure that data on dropouts are systematically collected. A uniform definition of a dropout is likely to be used in the near future, and this will permit better comparisons between districts. However, standard categories should be used for information gathering purposes (i.e., race/ethnicity).

3. That local school boards develop policies requiring district employees to attend cultural awareness workshops on an annual basis.

4. That local school boards review their disciplinary policies and procedures, identify their discriminatory use against minorities, and develop alternatives that retain students.

5. That local school district administrators ensure that each school provides a learning climate characterized by clear and fair rules (which are perceived as such by students).

6. That local schools provide a learning climate characterized by a multiethnic philosophy (Grant, 1984).

7. That local schools provide a learning climate and curriculum that validate the culture of ethnic minority students (Ogbu, 1981).

8. That local schools provide a learning climate which is responsive to the academic needs of ethnic minority students.

9. That local school districts support teachers exploring new pedagogical techniques, such as employing art education practices in developing basic academic skills (Webb, 1982).

10. That local schools provide tutors who meet with potential dropouts in small groups at least twice a week (Caliste, 1984).

11. That local school representatives develop new lines of dialogue with minority parents and methods to involve them in the education of their children.

12. That local school district administrators investigate incidents involving school representatives encouraging students to dropout and take corrective measures where necessary (including imposing the severest of sanctions).

13. That local school district administrators determine the cultural bias of standardized tests used in their district, assess their negative impact on ethnic minority students, and take necessary corrective action.

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